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Dear Dr. Lederberg:

When we met briefly at Columbia during the Bush-"Science the Endless Frontier" celebrations, I mentioned that I had just come across a letter which I had written to you some time ago in response to a request of yours. For some unaccountable reason, as I then explained, it had been put aside with some research papers and had just come to light.

When I got home from the Columbia meetings, I put the response to your letter in my outgoing box (so I thought) to be put into an envelope and mailed to you prontissimo. I regret to say that by error it (and some other documents) were filed rather than mailed and I have just come upon it in going through my files.

I hope the information may still be of some use to you. The letter is itself now obsolete because, as I have learned from Roy Porter, he has already made contact with you and you have been of great help in that enterprise.

I do apologize for this double delay. Our friend Benjamin Franklin once wrote, under somewhat similar circumstances, that "it is never too late to mend" and I trust sincerely that in this case it is not "too late" and that you will not think of me as negligent in my correspondence or not caring. I must confess that it seems beyond all reason that this should have happened twice--but

I do hope to make contact with you later in the year when I undertake to write up some research and thinking about scientific discovery. In particular I should like to follow up on some ideas I read in a reprint you sent me, written (as I recall) in collaboration with Harriet Zuckerman. Toward that end, do you have handy a list of your publications analyzing either your own research or the research of others? That would be very helpful to me to prepare myself for an eventual discussion with you.

Once again, my sincere regrets at this double delay.

Sincerely yours,


I. Bernard Cohen

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